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National Liberal Committee, Ottawa

A message of liberalism

Ottawa

[1920?]

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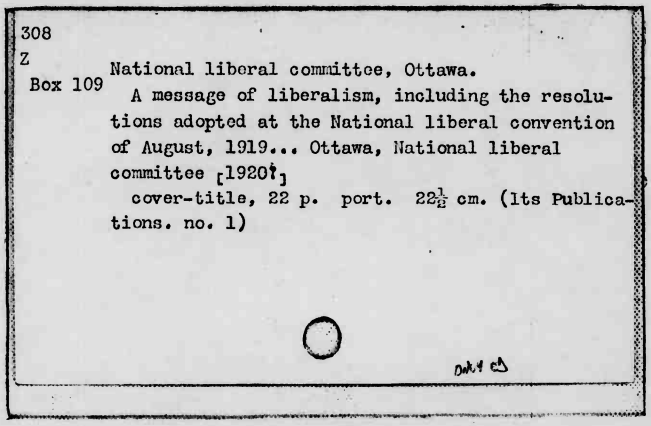
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A Message of Liberalism

including the

RESOLUTIONS

adopted at

The National Liberal Convention

of August, 1919

NATIONAL LIBERAL COMMITTEE
115 SPARKS STREET
OTTAWA

HONOURABLE W. L. MACKENZIE KING, M.P., *Liberal Leader*
ANDREW HAYDON, *National Organizer and General Secretary*
JOHN LEWIS, *Editor of Liberal Publications*

PUBLICATION NO. 1

HONOURABLE W. L. MACKENZIE KING, M.P.
Liberal Leader

THE Resolutions here presented were adopted at the great National Liberal Convention held at Ottawa on August 5, 6 and 7, 1919. It was the first gathering of the kind since the historic Convention of 1893, the prelude to the Liberal victory of 1896. It had been planned by Sir Wilfrid Laurier with the object of framing a platform which would express the real voice of the Liberals of Canada. His lamented death made it necessary for the Convention also to choose a leader. This was the first time, so far as the Dominion is concerned, that a leader was chosen in that democratic way.

The Convention was large and representative, comprising 1806 delegates. Even journals that were hostile or cold admitted that it was a magnificent gathering, well organized and harmonious. Harmony was due to enthusiasm, not to machine methods. Many delegates came to the Convention with open minds as to the leadership, conscientiously trying to form their judgments by what they heard, and to make the choice that would be best for party and country. It was conceded that Mr. King was freely and fairly elected, and the other candidates, Hon. W. S. Fielding, Mr. D. D. McKenzie and Hon. Geo. P. Graham, accepted his election cheerfully and, in excellent speeches, gracefully moved that it be made unanimous.

The interest of the delegates in the policy of the party was evinced by a mass of resolutions, from which those adopted were carefully selected by representative committees. They express as nearly as possible the ideas of the great body of delegates. They are submitted in the hope of indicating the aims of the Liberal party and of stimulating free discussion.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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Resolution on "Loyalty to the King and Gratitude to the Canadian Army"

This Convention desires to place on record its devotion to the person and office of His Gracious Majesty King George the Fifth and its appreciation of his untiring efforts during the war in promoting harmony throughout his Dominions, and also its unalterable attachment to the British Empire and to our own beloved Canada.

And this Convention further desires to place on record its gratitude to the valiant Canadian Army for its splendid share in the great victory which has brought the blessings of peace to the world. In the desperate struggle between the forces of autocracy and democracy our gallant soldiers have covered themselves with glory by their courage and devotion to duty and have earned the undying gratitude of all Canadians and made the name of Canada an inspiration for future generations.

Resolution on "The Death of Sir Wilfrid Laurier"

Sadly and mournfully the members of this National Convention of the Liberal Party of Canada record their sense of the irreparable loss the country has suffered in the death of the Right Honourable Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

During more than forty-five years he was continuously prominent as a member of the Canadian Parliament. For nearly thirty-two years he was the honoured Chief and Leader of the Liberal Party in this country. He has long been recognized as Canada's most distinguished statesman and as an outstanding figure among the Councillors of His Majesty everywhere in the British Empire. His lifetime was spent in the service of his country and his King. History will justly accord to him a high position among the great men of the world.

Through all his life his chief aim and object was to bring into better accord and greater harmony with each other the two principal races of this country that all might become more truly Canadians, whether of French or of British descent. The great wish and hope with which to the end his soul was filled was that we—his followers and his friends—might carry on his life work in that regard, bringing it even in our time to still greater fruition till in Canada dissensions of either race or creed no longer should be known.

Pure of heart, unsullied in character, devoted always to the highest ideals—he led, as he governed, wisely and well. Great in success, he was perhaps even greater in adversity. Himself sprung from common people, it was throughout his life his pride and glory to stand at all times their advocate and champion.

In their grateful memories he has builded for himself a monument which will live while Canada endures, for he found this country a colony—he made it a nation.

In the hearts of his sorrowing friends—in the hearts indeed of all his countrymen—his life inspired not merely high regard and unfeigned esteem, but as well a real affection, which makes our grief at his loss so heartfelt and so keen that no words we may use could equal it.

He was indeed our country's best and greatest. In all things a "chevalier sans peur et sans reproche."

Report of the Committee on Party Organization

Adopted as a Resolution

The Committee on party organization beg to report as follows:—

We recommend the formation of a National Liberal Organization Committee to be constituted as follows:

1. The President, who shall be the Leader of the Liberal Party for Canada;

2. Nine Vice-Presidents, one from each Province, who shall be named by the Liberal Association of each Province. In the case of any Province in which there is no Provincial Liberal Association, the Liberal Premier or Leader of the Opposition shall nominate the Vice-President.

3. A National Council of fifty-four, one of whom shall be the Provincial Liberal Premier or Leader of the Opposition, or his nominee, as the case may be, and five others to be selected by the Liberal Association for the Province, where one exists, or by the Liberal Members of the House of Commons in a Province where there is no Liberal Association for such Province.

4. The Members of the Council in each Province to be a Finance Committee to receive subscriptions for the expenses of the Committee.

5. The Committee shall select a National Organizer, who shall have charge of the Head Office, which shall be located in Ottawa.

Resolution on "Financial Condition and Taxation"

WHEREAS the national safety demands that the serious financial position of the country should be known and appreciated in order that steps may be taken to cope with the same; and

WHEREAS on the 31st March last, according to the statement of the Minister of Finance, the net public debt was $1,584,000,000, or, roughly, $220 for every man, woman and child in the Dominion, involving an annual interest charge of about $115,000,000, and thus

imposing an annual burden for interest on debt alone of $15 per head of the population; and

WHEREAS the estimated expenditure of the Dominion Government for the present fiscal year is over $800,000,000, or roughly, $100 per head of the population; and

WHEREAS the estimated revenue is only $280,000,000, thus creating an estimated deficit of over $500,000,000—a sum equivalent to $62.50 per head of the population—which sum the Finance Minister proposes to obtain by borrowing; and

WHEREAS national disaster will overtake this country should the present method of financing the country's affairs be continued; and

WHEREAS both Great Britain and the United States at present raise more than 80 per cent of their revenue by direct taxation, while Canada raises not more than 20 per cent;

BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

1. That the serious nature of the country's financial situation calls for the profoundest consideration of all patriotic citizens, and the exercise of the severest economy by the Government;

2. That increase of revenue must be sought from an equitable and effective imposition and collection of graduated taxes, on business profits and income, applicable to all incomes above reasonable exemptions;

3. Taxes on luxuries.

Resolution "Condemning the Government for Non-enforcement of Income Tax Law"

This Convention condemns the Government because it has not enforced the Income Tax Law in such a manner as to make it produce the revenue which such a tax should produce if properly collected.

Resolution on "The Tariff"

That the best interests of Canada demand that substantial reductions of the burdens of Customs taxation be made with a view to the accomplishing of two purposes of the highest importance: *First:* diminishing the very high cost of living which presses so severely on the masses of the people; *Second:* reducing the cost

of the instruments of production in the industries based on the natural resources of the Dominion, the vigorous development of which is essential to the progress and prosperity of our country.

That, to these ends, wheat, wheat flour and all products of wheat; the principal articles of food; farm implements and machinery; farm tractors, mining, flour and saw-mill machinery and repair parts thereof; rough and partly dressed lumber; gasoline, illuminating, lubricating and fuel oils; nets, net-twines and fishermen's equipments; cements and fertilizers, should be free from Customs duties, as well as the raw material entering into the same.

That a revision downwards of the tariff should be made whereby substantial reductions should be effected in the duties on wearing apparel and footwear, and on other articles of general consumption (other than luxuries), as well as on the raw material entering into the manufacture of the same.

That the British preference be increased to 50 per cent of the general tariff.

And the Liberal Party hereby pledges itself to implement by legislation the provision of this resolution when returned to power.

Resolution on "Reciprocity"

That the Reciprocity Agreement negotiated with the United States by the Liberal Government of Canada, in 1911, was a measure which realized the hopes that had been entertained and efforts made for better trade relations between Canada and the neighbouring Republic, by the statesmen of both political parties in the Dominion, from the beginning of the Dominion's history.

That the Agreement was fair and just to both countries and well calculated to promote the good relations so desirable;

That the action of the Conservative party under the leadership of Mr. (now Sir) Robert Borden in opposing and defeating the Agreement was a sacrifice of the best interests of Canada for distinctly partisan ends.

That the insincerity of the movement of the Conservative leaders on that question has been abundantly evidenced by the fact that, after coming into office, they proceeded to make some of the very tariff changes a denunciation of which was their chief ground in the elections of 1911.

That the action of the Conservative leaders in preventing the consummation of so excellent an arrangement between the two countries deserves and should still receive, whenever the opportunity occurs, the severe condemnation of the Canadian people.

That the Reciprocity Agreement was approved in 1911 by the Congress of the United States, and the law giving such approval still remains on the American statute book.

That, if the proposal lately made in the Congress to repeal the said law be carried out, the people of Canada will have no cause to complain, since the Americans have kept the law unimpaired for the long term of eight years during which Canada has made no move to avail herself of its provisions.

That while, for these reasons, this Convention can take no exception to the proposal so made at Washington, we as Liberals again place on record our appreciation of the object of the said Agreement and our faith in the principles of friendly international relations underlying it, and we express our earnest hope that in both countries such principles will be upheld, and that a favourable moment may come when there will be a renewed manifestation by the two Governments of a desire to make some similar arrangement.

Resolution on "Encouragement to Agriculture"

In the interest of agricultural production and development it is expedient to encourage co-operation and induce greater investment in farming; therefore, it is deemed expedient to utilize the national credit to assist co-operative Agricultural Credit Associations to provide capital for agriculture at the lowest possible rates.

With the object of reducing the high cost of living by eliminating as far as possible the waste and expense in handling food products between the producer and consumer, it is expedient to extend the principle and system of Canadian Government Elevators and to provide interior and terminal cold storage warehouses equipped for the assembling, assorting, preparing, storing and grading of food products in order that co-operative organizations and others may have available to them reliable, modern equipment, for the distribution of farm products in superior condition and at lessened cost either for domestic consumption or for export. And that cold storage transportation facilities should be provided, at the cost of operation, for the shipment of food products throughout Canada and for the carrying to the markets of the world the surplus farm products of this country and delivering them in such condition that will make Canadian foodstuffs a standard of quality for the world's market.

That, in the interests of agriculture, in aid of greater production on the land, and for the conservation of the soil in Canada, it is expedient for the Government to arrange for the distribution of fertilizers at the lowest possible cost.

Your Committee on Agriculture begs to recommend that a Special Committee be appointed to prepare a resolution upon the banking system of Canada and the adapting of said system to satisfactory loans in connection with land and live stock, and to present such resolution to your Committee.

Resolution on "Labour and Industry"

RESOLVED that the Committee recommends that the National Liberal Convention accept in their entirety as a part of the Liberal Platform, in the spirit they have been framed and in so far as the special circumstances of the country will permit, the terms of the Labour Convention and General Principles associated with the League of Nations and incorporated in the Conditions of Peace.

These methods and principles for regulating labour conditions so set forth in the Treaty are as follows:

First—The guiding principle that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.

Second—The right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers.

Third—The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life as this is understood in their time and country.

Fourth—The adoption of an 8-hours day or a 48-hours week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained.

Fifth—The adoption of a weekly rest of at least twenty-four hours, which should include Sunday wherever practicable.

Sixth—The abolition of child labour and the imposition of such limitations on the labour of young persons as shall permit the continuation of their education and assure their proper physical development.

Seventh—The principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

Eighth—The standard set by law in each country with respect to the conditions of labour should have due regard to the equitable economic treatment of all workers lawfully resident therein.

Ninth—Each state should make provision for a system of inspection in which women should take part, in order to ensure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the protection of the employed.

AND FURTHER RESOLVED:

1. That the introduction into the government of industry or principles of representation whereby labour and the community, as well as capital, may be represented in industrial control, and their interests safeguarded and promoted in the shaping of industrial policies.

2. That in so far as may be practicable, having regard for Canada's financial position, an adequate system of insurance against unemployment, sickness, dependence in old age, and other disability, which would include old age pensions, widows' pensions, and maternity benefits, should be instituted by the Federal Government in conjunction with the Governments of the several provinces; and that on matters pertaining to industrial and social legislation an effort should be made to overcome any question of jurisdiction

between the Dominion and the provinces by effective co-operation between the several Governments.

3. The representation of labour on federal commissions pertaining to labour matters.

4. Effective legislation for the conservation of human life and health.

5. The representation of labour on the Board of Directors of the Canadian National Railways.

6. That the system of re-training soldiers, unfitted for their past work because of physical injuries, be extended to disabled workers in industry.

7. More effective restriction of Chinese immigration.

8. The federal incorporation of co-operative associations.

9. The acceptance of the principle of proportional representation.

10. Immediate and drastic action by the Government with respect to the high cost of living and profiteering.

11. Restoration of the control of the executive by Parliament, and of Parliament, by the people through a discontinuance of government by Order in Council and a just franchise and its exercise under free conditions.

Resolution on "Conservation and Improvement of Physical Standards of Canadians"

WHEREAS the Great War and the greater epidemic have taken an appalling toll of Canadian life; and

WHEREAS human life and physical efficiency are the Nation's greatest assets; and

WHEREAS the conservation and improvement thereof should be the Country's first care;

THEREFORE this gathering of Liberals in convention assembled pledges itself to a vigorous prosecution of the measures best calculated to conserve the life and improve the physical standard of our Canadian citizenship.

Resolution on "Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment"

1. WHEREAS it is considered that the guiding principle for a permanent settlement of the problem of Civil Re-establishment should be equitable treatment to soldiers in all avocations having regard to the length and nature of service;

RESOLVED that this Convention declares that the adoption of a system of cash grants to the soldiers and dependents of those who have fallen is the most satisfactory and effective means of

civil re-establishment—such grants to be in addition to the present gratuity and to any pension for disability resulting from service.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THIS CONVENTION FURTHER CONSIDERS:

2. That the whole matter of the education of the returned soldier be placed in the hands of competent educational authorities to provide for the co-ordination, improvement and extension of a system of educational training, both vocational and general.

3. Insurance.—That provision should be made whereby any increased cost of insurance in favour of the dependents of the soldier should be borne by the state where such increase arises from disability incurred during the war.

4. Pensions.—(a) That such pensions or allowances be granted as shall enable soldiers or their dependents as the case may be to maintain a liberal standard of living sufficient to guarantee health, education, and all the necessities, comforts and amenities which go to make up a standard of living worthy of Canadian citizenship.

(b) That soldiers permanently disabled should be trained for some useful occupation selected by themselves and for which they are fitted or can be fitted for such length of time as shall render them efficient in same and after being so trained should be assisted by the Government in obtaining employment at a rate of remuneration adequate to the services rendered in such employment.

(c) That from the moment of discharge and until said training is completed and such employment found, the soldiers permanently partially disabled as aforesaid and their dependents should receive pensions or allowances amply sufficient to enable them to maintain the liberal standard of living as aforesaid, and when employment has been found for said soldiers upon the completion of their training, if the remuneration received in such employment is not sufficient to maintain such standard of living, the Government should provide the deficiency.

(d) That soldiers who have returned or shall hereafter return partially or totally temporarily disabled and their dependents should receive during the period of such disability pensions or allowances amply sufficient to enable them to maintain a liberal standard of living as aforesaid.

5. Medical Examination.—That steps should be taken to secure uniformity in medical decisions as to disabilities by establishing permanent travelling medical appeal boards.

6. That more effective employment agencies should be created and the divergent efforts of the various organizations now in existence should be co-ordinated in a central authority.

7. That reference to soldiers in this resolution is intended to include as well sailors, aviators, and nurses whenever applicable, and Canadian soldiers serving with any of the Imperial or Allied armies so far as the benefits hereunder have not been provided for by the Imperial or Allied Governments.

Resolution on "Railways and Development of Natural Resources"

WHEREAS the construction of the National Transcontinental Railway wholly upon Canadian soil, including terminal facilities, and in the completion of the project steamship connection with Europe and the Far East, thus affording the best possible transportation between the Orient and the Mother Country and opening up a large portion of Canada not before developed, and providing for lowering of the freight rates, was undertaken by the Liberal Government and Parliament of Canada; and

WHEREAS the accomplishment of the purpose for which this transportation system was designed has been thwarted by the studied hostility of the Borden Administration, this Convention expresses its opinion that only by the defeat of the present Government can the beneficial results which should accrue from the construction of this great national transcontinental route be secured; and

WHEREAS the Government by its policy in dealing with the Canadian Northern Railway system, which, in addition to granting of subsidies and guaranteeing of bonds, also made large loans of the public monies and thus involved the Dominion of Canada in financial obligations which resulted in the Government assuming the ownership of the said system; and

WHEREAS in addition to assuming the enormous liabilities incurred by the purchase of the Canadian Northern Railway system the Borden Government forced through Parliament, in contravention of legislation already on the statute book, an Act under which $10,000,000 was paid to C.N.R. interests, the identity of whom has never been disclosed, this Convention condemns with all possible vigour this entire unbusiness-like transaction and demands full investigation into the conditions surrounding the purchase of the C. N. R. and the destination of the monies paid.

The Government now owns and operates some 16,000 miles of railway. We believe that the present system of management by a Board, the majority of the members of which devote but a small portion of their time to this work, is unwieldy, inefficient, and extravagant, and that under it and the present administration public ownership and operation will not receive a fair trial.

Adequate facilities and tonnage for ocean traffic are a vital concern to the commerce of Canada and the utter lack of foresight on the part of the Government in neglecting to see that such facilities and tonnage were provided for the immediate After-the-War period is not only humiliating to the Canadian people, but is materially impairing our export trade.

At this time when the country should be in a position to take full advantage of the opportunities to secure its proper share of the export business on which the financial, industrial, and agricultural

future of Canada depends, we are confronted with the lamentable situation that no adequate provision has been made for the transportation of the products of the farm, the factory and the forest to the markets of the world. With the knowledge of the enormous destruction of tonnage by the havoc of war in its possession, the failure of the Government to protect the trade of Canada against the condition that now confronts it shows an absence of business ability which merits the severest condemnation of the people of Canada.

This Convention declares its fullest confidence in the future of Canada, believing that a wise and economical development of our natural resources and a judicious and vigorous immigration and colonization policy, coupled with stringent economy and efficient management in every department of Government, will solve the transportation and other difficult problems now confronting the country.

Resolution on "Control of Liquor Traffic"

WHEREAS the regulation, restriction and prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors, within their several jurisdictions, are vested in the provinces, this Convention is firmly of the opinion that when, for the effective enforcement of restrictive or prohibitive legislation enacted by any province, supplemental federal legislation is, by the legislature of said provinces, deemed necessary, such legislation should on the request of said legislature, be enacted by the Federal Parliament.

Resolution on "Canadian Autonomy"

RESOLVED that we are strongly opposed to centralized Imperial control and that no organic change in the Canadian Constitution in regard to the relation of Canada to the Empire ought to come into effect until, after being passed by Parliament, it has been ratified by vote of the Canadian people on a Referendum.

Resolution on "National Unity"

Recognizing that the crown of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's life work and the dearest wish of his heart was the establishment of racial concord and national unity throughout the Dominion, the Liberal Party of Canada in National Convention assembled emphatically condemns all attempts to create racial discord and national disunion and would hold up as a lasting example to the Canadian people the inspiring ideal of that great Canadian—a united Canada in

which all Canadians shall be on an equal footing, all working together in harmony and concord for the upbuilding and aggrandizement of their common country.

Resolution on "Control of Natural Resources by Provinces"

RESOLVED that the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta should be granted the ownership and control of the natural resources within their respective boundaries on terms that are fair and equitable, with reference to all other provinces of the Dominion.

Resolution "Respecting Election Frauds"

WHEREAS it has been openly charged that there was a conspiracy to carry out an elaborate system of frauds in connection with the Military Voters' part of the War Times Election Act, for the purpose of overcoming the voice of the honest electorate of the Dominion, involving the voting of unqualified persons, double voting, personation, ballot stuffing, and the illegal switching or transferring of tens of thousands of votes to constituencies other than those in which the military electors were known to be entitled to vote;

AND WHEREAS it has been openly charged that these frauds would have been impossible without large numbers of the appointees of the Crown deliberately co-operating and committing perjury;

AND WHEREAS it has been openly charged that these colossal frauds were perpetrated under the direction and connivance of Cabinet Ministers, military officers and civilian officials holding influential and responsible positions;

AND WHEREAS it has been alleged that persons were officially known to be immediately implicated in the direction and control of these frauds, and were subsequently recommended by the Prime Minister for Imperial honours at the hands of His Majesty the King;

THEREFORE this Convention hereby demands the appointment of an impartial Royal Commission with unlimited power and authority to institute a full and exhaustive enquiry into the conduct of every phase of the illegal and other fraudulent practices in connection with the elections held under the aforesaid Military Voters' Act, and this Convention also demands the punishment of every person, military or civilian, who may be proved to have been implicated in the before mentioned election frauds.

The Citizen's Part in Government

The Liberal Party of Canada is now organized upon a thoroughly democratic basis. The leader, Hon. Mackenzie King, was elected by a large and representative convention of Liberals from all parts of Canada. The platform was adopted in the same way. This democratic character should be maintained. As Liberals we should not only preach democracy but practice it. We ought to make Liberals everywhere feel that they have a voice and a share in the promotion of Liberalism. The central Liberal Organization will do all in its power to disseminate information and ideas. But it needs the cordial co-operation of every Liberal in Canada. It needs their enthusiasm; it needs their independent thinking. It needs their aid in discussing public affairs in the press and on the platform, and in the daily familiar intercourse of neighbours and friends.

An Opportunity for Liberals

The present situation of public affairs in Canada is unusual, and involves both difficulty and opportunity. Men and women are thinking for themselves and breaking away from beaten paths. Some can see only confusion and danger in this. It is for Liberals to face the situation boldly, and adapt themselves to the new conditions. Wherever any man or woman has got rid of a prejudice, that ought to redound to the benefit of Liberalism, for Liberalism has had many battles to fight with prejudice. Wherever any man or woman has broken away from authority in opinion, that ought to redound to the benefit of Liberalism. Wherever anyone is examining new ideas, thinking for himself, that should redound to the benefit of Liberalism.

It does not follow that Liberals should necessarily adopt every new opinion that arises during such a ferment of thought as is now going on all over the world. Each must be examined upon its merits, and judged upon its merits, accepted, rejected or modified upon its merits, not because it is new or because it is old. But the very fact that thinking is spontaneous and independent is the opportunity of Liberalism. Liberalism is essentially progressive and open minded. It has a history and traditions of which it has reason to be proud. But that does not mean that it is to rest upon tradition and to become stationary. It is not a dead thing, but a living, growing organism. It thrives in an atmosphere of freedom, and especially of liberty of thought and of speech.

We Need Your Help

And so, in the fullest sense, it needs your help. It needs not only your vote on election day, but your heart and your intellect every day. It needs your ideas. The Convention held in August, 1919, represented an advance in democracy, but we should strive to go even further than that. The whole body of Liberals throughout Canada should regard itself as always present at a great convention, always consulting and exchanging ideas. There should be as many local clubs and associations as possible, and each of these should be a centre of free, vigorous discussion of public affairs. Organization is of course important, and there are some whose talents lie in that direction rather than in speaking. But let each help according to his faculties and his inclinations.

From the central organization we shall do our best to disseminate full and accurate information and to give encouragement to Liberals. But let it be understood that what comes from this source is not intended to set bounds to discussion, but to stimulate discussion. Try to imagine that we are all present at a great convention. We claim only the right to be heard, and we want you to be heard. We do not know from what city, village or township in Canada, from what man or woman may emanate some idea that will enrich Liberalism and promote the welfare of Canada and its people.

Democracy and Free Discussion

Where democracy has failed, or failed in part, it has been for lack of this general interest in public affairs. The people cannot rule unless the people think. There may be the form and semblance of free institutions, and yet the government may be autocratic, if the people allow their thinking to be done by a few. There should be no such thing as a governing class in Canada. Ministers and Members of Parliament have of course special opportunities for acquiring knowledge of public affairs, but there is no mystery about the business. It is one of the duties of public men to impart their knowledge to others, to indicate the sources of information, and to place before the electors the material for forming an independent judgment.

The history and traditions of Liberalism are well worthy of study. Tradition may do good and it may do harm. It does harm if it keeps alive hatred and prejudice, or if it binds the soul and checks progress. It does good if it furnishes inspiration for the maintenance of essential principles and for continued progress.

Traditions of Liberalism

There were dark days for Liberalism in Great Britain during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, and for some years afterwards. Men in authority were so shocked by the excesses of the French Revolution that they rushed to the other extreme. They were frightened to death of every new idea. They put a rigorous censorship upon the press. They did their best to prevent the holding of public meetings. They made it a crime to advocate the most moderate measures of reform. A little more than a century ago, a meeting held at Manchester to advocate reform in the franchise was broken up by soldiers, several persons killed and many injured. The incident has passed into history under the name of the Peterloo massacre. A dozen years later the Reform Bill was passed, granting a very limited franchise, and some honest old Tories predicted that it would bring old England down in ruins. The granting of equal political rights to Catholics was opposed in the same unthinking way. These reforms are among the early triumphs of Liberalism. The period beginning with the French Revolution and ending with the Reform Bill should be studied by every Liberal. The material is unfortunately not very accessible, but Erskine May's constitutional history is a good authority.

But the history of British Liberalism did not stop there. The Reform Bill was only a modest beginning. Gladstone's great career shows a continual struggle against privilege and prejudice.

The Campbell Bannerman Government and the Asquith Government upheld the Liberal tradition and achieved noble social and economic reforms. Liberalism to-day in England is under a cloud. A state of war is always unfavorable to Liberalism. It produces reaction and it produces violence, both at variance with the calm, reasoned thinking and orderly progress for which Liberalism stands. But the ferment of new thought in England will in the long run serve the cause of Liberalism.

Liberalism in Canada

Liberalism in Canada begins with the establishment of responsible government and self-government. There was grave discontent followed by a flare of rebellion. Then followed a struggle along orderly, constitutional lines, which every Liberal of to-day ought to study for instruction and inspiration. It must be remembered that Canadian self-government was then a new and startling idea. The movement was regarded by many as seditious, and as aimed at the separation of Canada from Great Britain. British statesmen of weight on both sides of politics were unable to grasp the idea as Baldwin and Lafontaine grasped it. They could see no middle

path between separation and Downing Street rule. Canadian Tories eagerly took the reactionary side, claimed a monopoly of loyalty and denounced Baldwin and Lafontaine and their followers as rebels. These Reform leaders were at once firm and prudent. They refused either to be tempted into violence, or to be frightened away from the advocacy of reform by false cries. They stuck to their guns and they won a great battle.

So far from self-government causing separation, it at once removed friction between Canada and Great Britain. Henceforth, when anything was wrong in Canada, Canadians blamed their own government instead of the government at Westminster. Having won our liberty, we had only ourselves to blame if we abused it. Australia and New Zealand went the same way, with the same good results. After the South African war there was considerable opposition to the granting of self-government to the inhabitants, but the Campbell-Bannerman Government was firm in its adherence to Liberal principles, and events have shown the wisdom of its course. The only portions of the British Empire in which there is formidable discontent to-day are those which do not enjoy self-government.

Imperial Relations

The centralizing idea is not yet dead. At the Imperial Conference of 1911 a proposition was made for a central government for the Empire, which would not only have imperilled local autonomy in the Dominions, but impaired the authority of the present British Parliament. It was opposed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, by Mr. Asquith, then Prime Minister of Great Britain and by nearly all the representatives of the various Dominions. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's opponents in Canada denounced his attitude as hostile or cold toward Imperialism. But in 1917, Sir Robert Borden went to England and attended several conferences, and on his return he referred to a plan for a central governing body as neither feasible nor wise. He took virtually the same ground as Sir Wilfrid Laurier. A similar vindication has been given to the Liberal policy of a local navy for Canada as opposed to a contribution of money to a central navy. The Liberal idea was ridiculed and denounced as tending toward separation. It is now generally accepted as the sound policy.

There is now much talk of a change in the relations between Canada and the Empire. Canada's services in the war, it is said ought to be recognized by giving her a voice in Imperial affairs and foreign relations. The proposition sounds fair. But to give Canada an effective voice in these remote and complicated affairs is exceedingly difficult, and we must be careful not to lose the substance of liberty in chasing the shadow of power. Nothing should be done, Canada should be committed to nothing, without the full

knowledge and consent of the Parliament and the people of Canada. We should bear in mind the warning of the old Italian epitaph: "I was well; I would be better; and here I am." There are certain defects in the present relation, but our position promises to improve with time, if we do not imperil it by rash and ill-considered action. The real source of freedom and strength is the steady growth of Canada in population and industry. The best constitution is that which leaves us the largest freedom to develop along truly Canadian lines.

Provincial self-government is also a distinctive Liberal policy. In the early years after Confederation there was a strong tendency in the Conservative party toward centralizing government at Ottawa. Under the leadership of Sir Oliver Mowat, the Ontario Liberals defended the right of the Province to territory, to minerals and timber, and to legislature authority. They were uniformly successful, and it is largely to their battle that all the Provinces to-day enjoy full freedom in regard to local affairs.

Canadian autonomy and Provincial autonomy are simply aspects of freedom. The highest freedom of all is that of the individual. In war this freedom is impaired. This may be a necessary evil, but it should always be recognized as an evil, and eradicated at the earliest possible moment. Extraordinary powers given to the government should be revoked. The freedom and authority of Parliament should be restored. The regular processes of the law, with their safeguards for justice and the rights of the individual should be restored.

National Unity

National Unity is another principle, which, if not exclusively Liberal, is closely associated with the career of the great Liberal leader who now rests from his labors. At the outset of his career he warned his people against dividing the community upon religious lines. At various other times he protested against a division upon racial lines, between French Canadians and those who trace their descent to the British Islands. He was denounced in Ontario as French, and in Quebec, as English. He stood firmly for moderation and conciliation. He recognized that a country like Canada, with a population of various races, could achieve unity and thrive only by sinking all racial and religious differences in enthusiasm for common Canadian citizenship, a common pride in Canada, a common endeavour to promote the welfare of Canada.

Liberalism has often had occasion to "cut prejudice against the grain." It has been assailed by racial prejudice, by religious prejudice, by anti-American prejudice. It has won some victories, and it has occasionally gone down to honourable defeat in its fight against prejudice, bigotry, and hateful passion. It is essentially

the party of the open mind, of faith in humanity without distinction of race or creed, of friendship and confidence as opposed to hatred and suspicion.

The world is now torn by strife not only upon racial and national, but upon social and economic lines. The problem is different in form from that which Sir Wilfrid Laurier faced. But were he now with us in the prime of strength, he might recognize it as not different in substance. Difficult as may be the great social and economic problems of the age, much suffering may be averted by approaching them in a spirit of friendship and confidence as opposed to hatred and suspicion. We want no cleavage along class lines, as we want no cleavage along racial or religious lines. We must never forget the bond of our common Canadianism and our common humanity. We have in our great national estate an opportunity to build up a noble nation upon a firm foundation. The Liberal party will be judged by its recognition of the magnitude of the task, and its earnestness in doing its own share. In this message no attempt has been made to enter into details of policy: the party's platform is accessible to all and its several features will be discussed from time to time. This is an effort to get into touch with the great body of Liberalism throughout the country, to point to a few leading principles, and to indicate the work that is to be done, to be done by you, by the people, who are the final judges of leaders and parties.

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